

## VII. Criteria for Child Fatality Reviews

Child Fatality Review (CFR) Committees are required to review "eligible" deaths of all children from birth through age seventeen. O.C.G.A. 19-15-3(e)

Deaths eligible for review by local review committees are all deaths of children ages birth through 17 as a result of:

1. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
2. Any unexpected or unexplained conditions
3. Unintentional injuries
4. Intentional injuries
5. Sudden death when the child is in apparent good health
6. Any manner that is suspicious or unusual
7. Medical conditions when unattended by a physician (unless the death occurred while the person was a patient of a hospice licensed under Article 9 of Chapter 7 of Title 31)
8. Serving as an inmate of a state hospital or a state, county, or penal institution

## VIII. Child Fatality Review Process

- When a county medical examiner or coroner receives a report regarding the death of any child, he or she shall within **48 hours** of the death notify the chairperson of the CFR Committee of the county or circuit in which such child resided at the time of death.
- If the death of a child occurs outside the child's county of residence, it is the duty of the medical examiner or coroner in the county where the child died to notify the medical examiner or coroner and the chairperson in the county of the child's residence.
- The coroner or county medical examiner shall review the findings regarding the cause and manner of death for each child death report received and respond as follows:
  - (1) If the death **does not meet** the criteria for review, the coroner or medical examiner shall complete and sign the form designated by the Panel stating that the death does not meet the criteria for review. He or She shall forward the form and findings, within **seven days** of the child's

death, to the chairperson of the child fatality review committee in the county or circuit of the child's residence; or

(2) If the death **does meet** the criteria for review, the coroner or county medical examiner shall complete and sign the form designated by the Panel stating that the death meets the criteria for review. He or She shall forward the form and findings, within **seven days** of the child's death, to the chairperson of the child fatality review committee in the county or circuit of the child's residence.

- When the chairperson of a local CFR Committee receives a report from the coroner or medical examiner regarding the death of a child, that chairperson shall review the report and findings regarding the cause and manner of the child's death and respond as follows:
  - (1) If the report indicates the child's death does not meet the criteria for review and the chairperson agrees with the decision, the chairperson shall sign the form designated by the Panel (Form 1) stating that the death does not meet the criteria for review. He or she shall forward the form and findings to the Panel within **seven days** of receipt;
  - (2) If the report indicates the child's death does not meet the criteria for review and the chairperson disagrees with the decision, the chairperson shall follow the procedures for deaths to be reviewed;
  - (3) If the report indicates the child's death meets the criteria for review, and the chairperson disagrees with the decision, the chairperson shall sign the form designated by the Panel (Form 1) stating that the death does not meet the criteria for review. The chairperson shall also attach an explanation for this decision; or
  - (4) If the report indicates the child's death meets the criteria for review and the chairperson agrees with the decision, he or she shall follow the procedures for deaths to be reviewed.
- When a child's death meets the criteria for review, the chairperson shall convene the review committee within **30 days** after receipt of the report for a meeting to review and investigate the cause and circumstances of the death.
- The CFR Committee must prepare its report concerning the cause and circumstances of the child's death within **20 days**, excluding weekends and holidays, following the first meeting convened by the chairperson.
- Within **15 days** of its completion, the CFR committee must transmit a copy of its report to the Panel.

- The District Attorney of the county or circuit must also receive the report of the Committee with 15 days of completion when the child's death was the result of:
  - a. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome(SIDS) and no autopsy was performed to confirm this diagnosis
  - b. Accidental death that could have been prevented
  - c. Any sexually transmitted disease
  - d. Medical causes that could have been prevented
  - e. Suicide of a child known to DHR or when the findings of suicide is suspicious
  - f. Suspected or confirmed child abuse
  - g. Trauma to the head or body
  - h. Homicide

## CHILD FATALITY REVIEW TEAM TIMEFRAMES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

